

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

August 19, 2013 – 6:00 PM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROWAN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
.....

Present: Jim Sides, Chairman
Craig Pierce, Vice-Chairman
Jon Barber, Member
Mike Caskey, Member
Chad Mitchell, Member

County Manager Gary Page, Clerk to the Board Carolyn Barger, County Attorney Jay Dees and Finance Director Leslie Heidrick were present.

Chairman Sides convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Chairman Sides then read the following Disclaimer Statement prepared by the County's attorneys regarding the prayer issue:

"A United States federal court judge has issued the following order enjoining our Rowan County Board of Commissioners from 'knowingly and/or intentionally delivering or allowing to be delivered sectarian prayers at meetings of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners,' at least during the pendency of the current lawsuit. That injunction means that we have been ordered by the court to stop offering any prayers in the name of Jesus, as Americans have freely done for hundreds of years."

"We believe this injunction is unconstitutional and violates hundreds of years of religious liberty and free expression in America. However, as constitutional officers of this County, while we disagree with this injunction, we have chosen to voluntarily comply with it while the United States Supreme Court hears a similar legislative prayer case. That Supreme Court decision will set the standard for legislative prayer for the entire nation. Our attorneys have filed an *amicus* brief in that case to vigorously defend our prayer practice."

"In the meantime, for the next few months, until the Supreme Court makes a decision in that case, we will continue our longstanding prayer practice by using

words and phrases referenced in the Fourth Circuit legislative prayer case of *Simpson v. Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors*. These are the words from that case that we will continue to use in our prayers.”

“Lord God, our creator,” “giver and sustainer of life,” “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,” “Heavenly Father,” “Lord our Governor,” “mighty God,” “Lord of Lords, King of Kings, creator of planet Earth and the universe and our own creator.”

“As Commissioners who represent every citizen of Rowan County, we respect the various faiths or non-faith of all our Rowan County citizens. Our County’s prayer practice for many decades has allowed any commissioner to pray as his or her own personal faith requires or to decline to pray at all. No citizen is ever required to join in these prayers. However, if any citizen attending our Board of Commissioners meetings would still be offended by the new language from the court, we invite you to step out of the meeting room for a few minutes during the prayer. You will be summoned to return at the close of the prayer in order to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance, and you are then invited to participate in the remainder of our meeting on the same basis and with the same privileges as any other citizen of Rowan County.”

“Finally, if any Commissioner, taking his turn in the rotation has a sincerely held religious belief regarding the content of his prayer, that Commissioner may request a three-minute recess. The Commissioners may accommodate that religious belief by granting the recess and stepping outside the meeting room for the prayer. Audience members may remain in the meeting room, and following the three-minute recess, the meeting will reconvene with the Pledge of Allegiance.”

Chairman Sides talked about his efforts to live a Christian life. Chairman Sides said when he realized it would be his turn to pray, he asked God for guidance and was led to the sixth chapter of Matthew.

Chairman Sides provided the Invocation by asking all who wished to participate to join him in reciting The Lord’s Prayer.

Chairman Sides then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Barber moved, Commissioner Pierce seconded and the vote to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2013 Commission Meeting passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

CONSIDER DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

There were no deletions from the agenda.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Barber seconded and the vote to approve the agenda passed unanimously.

1. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Barber moved to pull Consent Agenda item I for discussion. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Caskey and passed unanimously.

Chairman Sides placed the issue on the regular agenda as item #2a.

Commissioner Barber moved, Commissioner Pierce seconded and the vote to approve the Consent Agenda as amended passed unanimously.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

A. Proclamation for Rowan County United Way Raised Here, Stays Here Day

WHEREAS, the Rowan County United Way was established in 1958 and is dedicated to improving the quality of lives through health and human services; and

WHEREAS, the County of Rowan is a strong advocate of the Rowan County United Way and its endeavors to assist and support the community through local agencies; and

WHEREAS, on September 6, 2013, Rowan County United Way will kick off their annual fundraising campaign with a farming theme; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to show support for the campaign and the agencies of Rowan County United Way, all citizens are encouraged to wear blue jeans on September 6, 2013.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim September 6, 2013

“ROWAN COUNTY UNITED WAY RAISED HERE, STAYS HERE DAY.”

- B. Award Service Sidearm to Retiring Deputy Stephen Fortune
- C. Food and Lodging Fee Changes
- D. Medical Fee Recommendations and Changes
- E. Tax Settlement Statement
- F. Sale of Surplus Property
- G. Proclamation for National Preparedness Month

WHEREAS, September is National Preparedness Month, a time set aside annually to encourage citizens to take necessary steps to prepare for any and all emergencies in their homes, businesses and communities; *and*

WHEREAS, Rowan County has made it a high priority to continue to build a strong and viable “culture of preparedness” throughout our county, including municipalities, colleges and universities, the private sector and the general public; *and*

WHEREAS, those who are prepared for emergencies recover faster and can help others who also may be affected, demonstrating community spirit in the face of adversity; *and*

WHEREAS, emergency preparedness is a shared responsibility, and every family that is able should prepare to be self-sufficient for the first 72 hours after disaster strikes; *and*

WHEREAS, Rowan County’s citizens and families can start their preparedness actions by making an emergency plan, participate in citizen preparedness activities such as Community Emergency Response Team training and asked to review the County’s Ready campaign’s Web site at www.ReadyROWAN.org.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners, does hereby proclaim September, 2013 as National Preparedness Month throughout the County, and urges all citizens to make preparedness a priority and work together to ensure that individuals, families, and our communities are prepared for disasters and emergencies of any type.

- H. Grant Application for Rowan County One Church One Child
- I. Proclamation for Rowan County Help Fair Day (pulled for discussion as agenda item #2a)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chairman Sides opened the Public Comment Period to entertain comments from any citizens wishing to address the Board. With no one wishing to address the Board, Chairman Sides closed the Public Comment Period.

2a. Proclamation for Rowan County Help Fair Day

(This item was pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion).

Commissioner Barber announced that the Rowan County Help Fair Day would be hosted by Grateful Heart Community Services to address hunger needs in the community. Commissioner Barber then read the proclamation as follows:

WHEREAS, the Piedmont Region of North Carolina was recently ranked the second hungriest place in America, according to The Food Research and Action Center’s 2012 Food Hardship Report; *and*

WHEREAS, on the heels of sweeping cuts to North Carolina’s unemployment benefits, officials with Second Harvest Food Bank believe parts of the Piedmont Region will continue to be ranked among the nation’s worst when it comes to children and adults facing hunger; *and*

WHEREAS, community service organizations have the power to help those in need and realize Americans are willing and eager to volunteer and make real changes in their communities; *and*

WHEREAS, Grateful Heart Community Services, a public charitable faith-based organization, has been providing emergency food and clothing since 2004 with the goal of helping to end hunger and have been aligned with Second Harvest Food Bank Metrolina since 2008, Feeding America since 2010, and Grateful Heart Community Services serves as a fiscal sponsor to the Rowan-Salisbury Help Fair Alliance; *and*

WHEREAS, the Rowan-Salisbury Help Fair Alliance will host the second annual “Help Fair Day,” hosted last year by Grateful Heart Community Services, on August 24th, 2013 to be held from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the J. F. Hurley YMCA, located at 828 Jake Alexander Boulevard West in Salisbury; *and*

WHEREAS, forty other agencies will be present and will have promotional items to share as well as information describing services they provide so these agencies can partner together with good works to help meet as many of our residents’ needs as possible.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby declare August 24, 2013 as “Help Fair Day” in Rowan County.

Commissioner Barber moved, Commissioner Caskey seconded and the vote to approve the Proclamation as presented passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC HEARING FOR ZTA 01-13

Senior Planner Shane Stewart reviewed miscellaneous amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. The existing text in the ordinance proposed to be removed appeared as ~~strike throughs~~ and proposed text appeared as **bold red text**.

Mr. Stewart highlighted some of the confusion in the text concerning small solar energy systems in the economic development districts established for I-85.

Mr. Stewart discussed the additional text in Section 21-56, of adding Animal Shelters, Boarding Kennels, and Dog Pounds in addition to Veterinary Services.

Mr. Stewart said the Planning Board had voted unanimously to recommend approval of the request as presented with the following Statement of Consistency: “The proposed changes are minor in nature; and rewording will address discrepancies and gaps in the Zoning Ordinance.”

Chairman Sides opened the public hearing to receive citizen input regarding the proposed amendments and with no one wishing to address the Board, Chairman Sides closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Mitchell moved, Commissioner Barber seconded and the vote to approve the Statement of Consistency as submitted passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mitchell moved to grant ZTA 01-13. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barber and passed unanimously.

The approved amendments were as follows:

**AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 21, ZONING
ORDINANCE**

Sec. 21-34. Economic development districts established for I-85.

(1) 85-ED-1.

a. In the 85-ED-1 district the following uses are permitted by right with a minimum lot size of five (5) acres:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).

b. The following are allowed with the issuance of a conditional use permit:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Communications and telecommunication towers (SIC 48 pt).

c. Approval of a PUD with a minimum lot size of twenty (20) acres will allow the above uses in addition to accessory and ancillary uses on up to ten (10) percent of the total acreage.

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

~~Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).~~

(2) 85-ED-2.

a. Certain industries shall be allowed as permitted uses with standards provided to protect adjacent neighborhoods. Other heavy industries and distribution and wholesale operations may be allowed as conditional uses. If part of a larger master plan limited accessory and ancillary retail and service uses may be allowed.

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).

b. The following are allowed with the issuance of a conditional use permit:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Communications and telecommunication towers (SIC 48 pt).

c. Approval of a PUD with a minimum lot size of twenty (20) acres will allow the above uses in addition to accessory and

ancillary uses on up to ten (10) percent of the total acreage.

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

~~Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).~~

(3) 85-ED-3 Corporate Park District.

a. Allowed primary uses are:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).

b. Allowed accessory and ancillary uses on up to twenty (20) percent of the total acreage:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

~~Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).~~

c. The following are allowed with the issuance of a conditional use permit:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Communications and telecommunication towers (SIC 48 pt).

(4) 85-ED-4 Retail Center.

a. Allowed primary and accessory uses are:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems 6,000 sq.ft. or less (SIC 491 pt).

b. The following are allowed with the issuance of a conditional use permit:

Transportation, communication, and utilities group:

Communications and telecommunication towers (SIC 48 pt).

Sec. 21-56. Specific criteria for uses listed as SR in section 21-113.

(2) *Additional standards applicable to specific uses listed as SR in the agriculture, forestry and fishing in the rural district.*

a. *Veterinary services (SIC 074) and Animal Shelters, Boarding Kennels, Dog Pounds (SIC 0752 pt).*

1. *Site plan.* A site plan shall be provided showing the lot and all existing and proposed buildings as well as all runs and/or

training facilities.

2. *Siting.* Kennels not wholly enclosed by a security fence at least six (6) feet in height; and all kennels not wholly enclosed within a building shall be located at least one hundred (100) feet from the lot line of any residentially developed lot.

3. *Runs.* No run area is allowed with the setback.

(6) *Additional standards applicable to specific uses listed as SR in the transportation, communication, electric, gas and sanitary services group.*

a. *Trucking (SIC 41-421).*

Sec. 21-60. Conditional use requirements for specific uses.

(3) *Transportation, communications, electric, gas and sanitary services group: Communications and telecommunications towers (SIC 48(part)).*

e. *Tower heights and types.* To maintain the character of the rural areas of the county and allow for placement in the commercial and industrial areas of the county, new towers will be regulated in the following manner:

1. Rural Agricultural (RA) **and Neighborhood Business (NB) districts.** Monopole not to exceed one hundred fifty (150) feet based on five (5) co-located antenna arrays.

2. Commercial, business, industrial (CBI), Industrial (IND), 85-ED-1, 85-ED-2, 85-ED-3, and 85-ED-4. Monopole or lattice tower not to exceed one hundred ninety-nine (199) feet based on six (6) co-located antenna arrays.

(11) *Manufactured home parks.*

h. *Internal street standards.*

1. *Generally.* ...The subgrade, base course, and pavement surface shall be inspected and approved by the county ~~department of environmental services~~ **planning and development department** before a certificate of occupancy is issued. The owner of the park shall be responsible for coordinating inspection of each phase of street construction with county ~~environmental services~~ **planning and development department**...

Sec. 21-113. Table of uses.											
P - Permitted by Right P(A) - Permitted as Accessory Use SR - Permitted with Special Requirements C - Conditional Use		Zoning Districts									
		Residential					Non-residential				
SIC	Use	RA	RR	RS	MHP	MFR	CBI	NB	INST	IND	
<i>Residential</i>											
	Residential clustering	C	C	C		C	C	C	€		
	Major Subdivisions	P	P	P	P	P	C	C	€ P	P	
<i>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</i>											
1	Agricultural Production - Crops	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
2	Agricultural production livestock and animal specialties, <i>all except</i>	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
8	Forestry	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
9	Fishing, hunting and trapping	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
<i>Manufacturing</i>											
37	Transportation equipment	SR					P	SR		P	
<i>Transportation, communications, electric, gas and sanitary services</i>											
421	Trucking	SR	SR				P	SR		P	

4. QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARING FOR Z 03-13 AND CUP 04-13

Chairman Sides read the Chairman’s Speech (Exhibit A) and declared the public hearing for Z 02-13 and CUP 04-13 to be in session. Chairman Sides said the public hearing would focus on an application submitted by Mark Vestal for property located at 281 Lane Parkway. The purpose of the application was to rezone 15 acres from Commercial, Business, Industrial (CBI) to Industrial (IND) and consider a conditional use permit to accommodate a metal recycling facility on Tax Parcels 409-002 and 189.

The Clerk swore in those wishing to provide testimony in the case.

Senior Planner Shane Stewart provided the Staff Report (Exhibit B), as well as a power point presentation (Exhibit C) as he discussed the application.

Using the power point (Exhibit C), Mr. Stewart highlighted the site plan details, the zoning criteria, the conditional use criteria, and the evaluation criteria.

Mr. Stewart stated that while the applicant had submitted a conditional use permit for scrap metal recycling, the Board of Commissioners must consider the entire range of uses within the IND district since the applicant would not be bound by the site plan submitted in the conditional use permit process as with a parallel conditional use rezoning. Mr. Stewart said the Planning Board voted unanimously (8-0) to recommend approval of the rezoning request, but stated the board did not consider the conditional use component since it was not part of a conditional use district.

If approved, Planning Staff suggested the following conditions for consideration for which Mr. Stewart said the applicant was agreeable.

1. Obtain driveway permit for new entrance to Lane parkway.
2. Extend the 20' buffer along the operational limits at the eastern property line common with Pietryk.
3. When mature, scrap metal must remain below height of proposed screen.
4. Comply with all DENR regulations regarding NPDES permit and all other operational compliance standards.

Mr. Stewart provided the Board with sample Findings of Fact (Exhibit D).

The following Statement of Consistency was recommended by the Planning Board:

1. The rezoning request Z 03-13 is consistent with the Eastern Land Use Plan based on the encouraged Commercial and Industrial development for the area, and
2. The request will have no impact on schools, roads, or utilities; and
3. The intended purpose of the IND zoning district and the request are compatible with one another.

The following Statement of Reasonableness was recommended by the Planning Board:

1. The proposed rezoning Z-03-13 is consistent with the adjacent properties includes zoning designations of CBI and 85 Economic Development districts 2 and 3 which permit light to medium industrial uses;
2. Compatible with Eastern Land Use Plan and I-85 Corridor Overlay; and
3. The request would have no negative impacts on roads, schools or utilities.

With no one else sworn to provide further testimony, Chairman Sides closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Mitchell moved, Commissioner Pierce seconded and the vote to approve the Statement of Consistency and the Statement of Reasonableness as recommended passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mitchell moved that the development of the property in accordance with the proposed conditions will not materially endanger the public health or safety.

FACT: The metal recycling portion of the business will use an existing driveway connection located at the end of NCDOT maintained road and will obtain a commercial driveway permit for the future connection.

FACT: This site is located approximately ¼ mile from a future fire hydrant.

FACT: Condition of approval # 4 will ensure compliance with all NCDENR regulations including potential NPDES standards.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barber and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mitchell moved that the development of the property in accordance with the proposed conditions will not substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property, or that the development is a public necessity, and;

FACT: No material evidence was presented suggesting this request would injure property values.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barber and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mitchell moved that the location and character of the development in accordance with the proposed conditions will be in general harmony with the area in which it is located and in general conformity with any adopted county plans.

FACT: As evidenced from the staff report, zoning districts within the area permit a range of light to medium intensity industrial uses.

FACT: Site operations will not be visible to any residences.

FACT: Compliance with the Junkyard Control Act and installation of evergreen trees will minimize visual impacts to I-85 and adjacent properties.

FACT: The Eastern Rowan Land Use Plan identifies this property as an existing commercial / industrial area that is also located within the I-85 corridor, which further encourages commercial / industrial uses.

FACT: The plan also recognizes expansions to existing businesses that minimize conflict with surrounding properties may be reasonable. Surrounding property owners rendered no opposition at the meeting.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barber and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mitchell moved to approve Z 03-13 and CUP 04-13 as presented with conditions as established by Planning Staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barber and passed unanimously.

5. PRESENTATION FOR PROPOSED EXISTING INDUSTRY SUPPORT INITIATIVES

Robert Van Geons, Rowan Economic Development Commission (EDC) Director, reported on the proposed Existing Industry Support Initiative (Initiative) that the Board supported in the current budget.

Mr. Van Geons said the EDC currently visits existing businesses and responds to calls from any business. Mr. Van Geons said with the resources provided by the County, the Initiative was designed to dramatically and systematically improve

and establish an ongoing structure that was far better than the response network in place. Mr. Van Geons said the EDC wanted to build a program that was efficient and financially sustainable, recognizing the program was a two (2) year pilot project. Mr. Van Geons stated the goal was to increase the volume, quality, and consistency of existing industry to improve communications, and to increase effectiveness and utilization of training programs and technical assistance programs. Mr. Van Geons went on to say the EDC wanted to expand the efforts of promoting existing businesses and increase the interactions of existing industry. Mr. Van Geons said the EDC wanted to establish the communication and information structure to continue after the funding for the Initiative ceased.

Mr. Van Geons said part of the project was increasing the capacity of the EDC. Mr. Van Geons discussed adding contractual staff. Mr. Van Geons said there would be collaboration through technology and pulling everyone into a shared data base of information. Mr. Van Geons then explained the techniques as to how this would be accomplished to see a project through to completion.

Mr. Van Geons said the position for the Initiative would schedule, coordinate, participate with visiting companies, and be in charge of pulling together research and data bases. Mr. Van Geons also said the position would be responsible for implementing a program to train the volunteer. Also, Mr. Van Geons said this position would be in charge of programming events and implementing the communication models.

Mr. Van Geons said the EDC was ready to acquire a technology program designed for existing industry support.

Mr. Van Geons said there had been a lot of discussion with the Chamber, and Chamber President Elaine Spalding, who had been very supportive of the businesses in the community, whether or not they were Chamber members. Mr. Van Geons said Rowan Cabarrus Community College (RCCC) had a natural connection, as well as the United Way. Mr. Van Geons stated there would be a reach out to the Centralina Workforce Development Board, and the North Carolina State Extension Services. Mr. Van Geons said he felt the BOC would want to see detailed reports of meetings, what companies were being talked to, and what services were utilized. Mr. Van Geons stated that there was hope that in twelve (12) months there would be success stories showing progress and how the Initiative had helped the companies grow the bottom line.

Mr. Van Geons shared some of the deliverables that were being proposed, with one being the creation of a Manufacturers Advisory Council (MAC), something that had been heard from existing industries. Mr. Van Geons said a Rowan Industrial Jobs Network would be established to pool together employment needs of the industrial community, by jointly buying ads and jointly putting out information to find the best workers.

Mr. Van Geons said the difficulty would be in trying to find out the best way to present information of what the community has to offer industry without harassment. Mr. Van Geons said he hoped to have the first gathering of the manufacturing and industrial sector in late September, and that by October 1, the contract steps would be fully underway for an event pulling people together.

Mr. Van Geons stated the cost was anticipated at \$44,000 for the remainder of the fiscal year, with \$30,000 from the BOC for the Initiative and the remaining coming from the EDC budget. Mr. Van Geons expressed hope the Initiative would be self sustaining by the end of year two (2). Mr. Van Geons said the Initiative would help existing business stay here and identify problems and support their growth and better meet their needs. Mr. Van Geons said there would be opportunities with recruitment, and the most valuable tool being unsolicited endorsements of existing businesses in the community.

Commissioner Pierce was critical of the current job being done by the EDC to retain and grow existing businesses that had survived the economic downturn. Commissioner Pierce said he had been under the impression that a lot of the information presented was already being done. Commissioner Pierce also did not agree with forming another committee. Commissioner Pierce was in agreement if more money had to be used it needed to come out of the EDC Fund Balance, which was more than adequate to take care of the position. Commissioner Pierce went on to say that he was disappointed with the EDC and expressed his desire to see action taken to energize the County with business. Commissioner Pierce said he would like to see a program with initiatives for existing businesses to show a desire for chain companies to move their locations to Rowan County. Commissioner Pierce felt the EDC needed to put together some type of program that could be used for existing businesses and present the program to the Commissioners by the end of the year.

Mr. Van Geons responded that staff proactively targeted meeting with companies and that the proposed Initiative was taking the program to a new level and looking to engage a wider net of volunteers.

Commissioner Pierce stated that he had been in touch with the EDC regarding businesses and citizens who had contacted him directly with their concerns for businesses planning to leave Rowan County. Commissioner Pierce questioned again what was being done for existing businesses in the County to prevent these businesses from relocating. Commissioner Pierce said he wanted to see results and felt that forming another committee was not the way to go about it. Commissioner Pierce said he wanted to see action countywide.

Commissioner Barber thanked Mr. Van Geons and the EDC, stating he understood the EDC worked hard. Commissioner Barber said he had met with Chamber President Elaine Spalding last week, and talked about the Buy Local initiative that was underway. Commissioner Barber asked if there were any

synergies surrounding the current effort and combining with the efforts of the Buy Local initiative. Mr. Van Geons responded there was an ongoing collaboration with the Chamber, the United Way and the Community College in regards to companies that have a need or those who needing to be seen.

Commissioner Barber said with the demographics of the population of Rowan County, the EDC had a tough job in comparison to surrounding counties. Commissioner Barber highlighted some of the demographics of the aging population.

Chairman Sides said companies that had been around for years were ignored and repeatedly called to request assistance without receiving a return call. Chairman Sides said it was easy to bring companies to the County with incentives, but it seemed as if the existing businesses were being forgotten. Chairman Sides said this was an area that needed improvement. Chairman Sides said approximately six (6) months ago he requested a report dealing with all industries that had been brought to Rowan County, what it had cost in terms of incentives, etc. Chairman Sides said he had still not received the report.

Mr. Van Geons responded that he and Finance Director Leslie Heidrick had met over the last several weeks to finalize the most recent figures for the report. Mr. Van Geons stated there were times where the EDC had dropped the ball, which was why the Initiative needed to be a community wide endorsement. Mr. Van Geons explained that more staff time was put into a \$300,000 investment project than into a \$7 million project due to there being more resources available. Mr. Van Geons apologized to any company that could have been missed. Mr. Van Geons said he felt the EDC charge was to help any business, regardless of their size.

Commissioner Caskey felt the Initiative should help avoid any companies being missed. Commissioner Caskey felt it would be a positive for the County to have an EDC staff member working just with existing businesses. Commissioner Caskey said he looked forward to good results.

Commissioner Mitchell said he liked the information that connected local companies to opportunities that might be worldwide, which otherwise they would not have the time to research. Commissioner Mitchell said it was an adequate position for the EDC to be a clearing house of information. Commissioner Mitchell said a lot of complaints were received on many different departments and it would be interesting when the reports came out to see how many businesses used the information. Commissioner Mitchell said the County could not offer every business an 85% tax incentive; however, the Initiative would provide local businesses the opportunity to utilize the resources of the EDC.

Chairman Sides said it was a positive for the EDC to work with the Chamber instead of against it and vice versa, as the initiative would be a joint effort to bring jobs and businesses to Rowan County.

6. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Finance Director Leslie Heidrick presented the following budget amendments for the Board's consideration:

- Finance – To budget Homeland Security Grant Program Training Grant for Emergency Services. The grant was approved by the Board on November 7, 2011 with the grant period of 9-1-2011 through 8-30-2014 - \$1,856
- Health – Health Link program budgeted \$25,000 for FY 13-14; however award letter received for \$20,000. Revenues and expenditures need to be reduced - \$5,000
- Finance – Appropriate funds for water-sewer improvements at the Rowan County Airport and budget for the related check received from the City of Salisbury. Also, appropriate funds for construction of an accessory-use office building at the Airport - \$259,384

Commissioner Mitchell moved approval of the budget amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce and passed unanimously.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Barber moved to adjourn at 6:55 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Barger, CMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board/
Assistant to the County Manager